

THE PLAYER IN PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

ROBERT LESLIE GOODE, B. S.

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THE PLAYER IN PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

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Source of Information

Information for this study was obtained from the personal experience of the writer as a professional football player, from interviews with many of the fine players

of the National Football League and from published sources.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

Limitations

Purpose

Due to the type of material covered in parts of this thesis, some sections will be entirely limited to what the writer has been able to collect through personal interviews with people connected with professional football. The purpose of this thesis is to present information about some of the circumstances experienced by the player in professional football. The writer wishes to present material that will help the general public and the prospective new players to understand more fully the role of the player in professional football. All of the information has been gathered secondhand rather than from management. Contractual matters are somewhat touchy subjects in professional football.

General Nature of the Study

This study contains information pertinent to professional football. An effort has been made to present the facts pertaining to professional football, to the many aspects and ramifications of contractual negotiations, and to the life of professional football players during the football season. The final chapter contains an evaluation of professional football from the standpoint of the player.

Procedure

Source of Information

Information for this study was obtained from the personal experience of the writer as a professional football player, from interviews with many of the fine players years as a player on a team 1 of the National Football League.

of the National Football League, and from published sources.

Limitations

Due to the type of material covered in parts of this thesis, some sections will be entirely limited to what the writer has been able to collect through personal interviews with people connected with professional football.

The chapter entitled "Contractual Matters" may be somewhat limited due to the fact that all of the information has been gathered secondhand rather than from management. Contractual matters are somewhat touchy subjects in professional football in more ways than one, and the writer has tried to treat this subject as fairly as possible, both from the standpoint of the player and from the standpoint of the management.

Procedure

This thesis is not a research study. It is a discussion of the general nature of professional football, conditions and regulations confronting the player, and pertinent information relating to a player's life while under contract to play professional football. It is a recall of personal experiences encountered during several years as a player on a team of the National Football League.

A survey of literature available in books and magazine articles reveals that little has been written about contractual matters confronting professional football players or about the player's life during the football season. Therefore, little reference has been made to published materials.

An effort to secure data relating to salaries and other contractual matters from administrative offices of the National Football League was met with no success. However, many of the opinions given here have resulted from personal discussion with the professional football players.

It is often asked, "Is the game of professional football as rough as they say?" The answer is still being battered around quite a bit. This is especially true in the sport that the Commissioner of the National Football League, Mr. Bert Bell, calls "the roughest game in the world," professional football.

Short History of Professional Football

Prior to 1920 professional football was a haphazard enterprise in which almost anyone could form a team and play what ever opposition they could find. This type of organization proved to be unsatisfactory, and in 1920 the teams banded together into the American Professional Football Association.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL NATURE OF PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

Football was born some 900 years ago when an unidentified Britisher dug up the skull of some poor unfortunate Dane and began to kick it over the English hill sides. This, as gruesome as it may sound, was the embryo of our modern American football.

Later the udder from a cow replaced the Dane's skull, and the pattern and strategy of the game began to progress. Today the intricate refinements of the T-formation seem farfetched from that initial attempt at the game, or do they? Skulls still are being battered around quite a bit. This is especially true in the sport that the Commissioner of the National Football League, Mr. Bert Bell, calls "the roughest game in the world," professional football.

Short History of Professional Football

Prior to 1920 professional football was a haphazard enterprise in which almost anyone could form a team and play what ever opposition they could find. This type of organization proved to be unsatisfactory, and in 1920 the teams banded together into the American Professional Football Association.

The Association¹ operated for one year. During that period some 23 teams were associated with this organization. Due to the laxity of its franchise regulations the Association folded in the same year of its inception.

Mr. Joseph F. Carr thought the idea of a professional football league had merit and in 1921 organized the National Professional Football League. Franchises were sold for as little as \$50, many of which are still in operation.² The first few years were painful for the league, and it was not until 1933 that the teams began to show a profit. The league gained more and more in popular favor, but in 1946 its monopoly of professional football was challenged by the newly organized All-American Conference.³

The two leagues battled each other for popularity until they merged into one league under the name of The National Football League.⁴ This merger took place in 1949 and ended a brief but bitter war between the two factions.

The National Football League at the present time is

¹ Menke, Frank G., The Encyclopedia of Sports, p. 405.

² Loc. cit.

³ Loc. cit.

⁴ Loc. cit.

composed of two divisions, Western and Eastern, comprised of 6 teams each.

Professional football either team may advance a fumbled ball.

Description of the Game

Professional football is not hampered with the limited substitution rule as in collegiate football. In professional football the platoon system is used. Due to the physical difference between college and professional football fields is the position of the goal post. The goal post in professional football is positioned on the goal line instead of the end zone line as in collegiate football to encourage more scoring by way of the field goal. The position of the goal post in professional football placed a premium on a good field goal specialist.

The rules in professional football are similar also to the rules in collegiate football. However, two major differences deserve mentioning. First, in professional football a ball carrier is not down until an official declares the ball dead. This enables the ball carrier to get up after he has been knocked down and advance the ball farther unless the ball has been declared dead by an official. In collegiate football the ball carrier is down and the ball becomes dead when any part of his body, other than his hands and feet, touch the ground. This rule in professional football may be changed shortly because a number of injuries occur from piling on. The second major

difference is that in collegiate football only the team in possession of the ball may advance a fumble, while in professional football either team may advance a fumbled ball.

Professional football is not hampered with the limited substitution rule as in collegiate football. In professional football the platoon system is used. Due to the fact that the "pros" are not limited as to substitutions, the game is very highly specialized in every position. For example, the professional teams have an offensive team, a defensive team, a punting team, a punt receiving team, a kick-off team, a kick-off receiving team, and an extra point and field goal team. These teams are substituted freely whenever needed.

Names and Office Locations of Teams

Eastern Division

Cleveland Browns-----405 Leader Building
Cleveland, Ohio

Philadelphia Eagles---15th at Locust Street
Philadelphia, Pa.

New York Giants-----11 West 42nd Street
New York 36, N. Y.

Pittsburgh Steelers---521 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Washington Redskins---9th at H Street, NW
Washington, D. C.

Chicago Cardinals-----511 South Plymouth Court
Chicago, Ill.

Western Division Training Camp Site

Detroit Lions-----1401 Michigan Ave.
 Detroit 16, Mich.

Chicago Bears-----233 West Madison Street
 Chicago, Ill.

San Francisco 49ers---760 Market Street
 San Francisco, Calif.

Los Angeles Rams-----7813 Beverly Blvd.
 Los Angeles, Calif.

Green Bay Packers-----349 South Washington Street
 Green Bay, Wis.

Baltimore Colts-----2023 North Charles Street
 Baltimore, Md.

Locations of Team Training Camps

The twelve teams of the National Football League do not have spring training. They have what amounts to the same thing during their summer training camps. Following are the locations of the team training camps for the 1954 football season.

Eastern Division Training Camp Site

Cleveland Browns-----Hiram, Ohio

Philadelphia Eagles--Hershey, Pa.

New York Giants-----Salem, Ore.

Pittsburgh Steelers--Olean, N. Y.

Washington Redskins--Los Angeles, Calif.

Chicago Cardinals----Lake Forest, Ill.

Western Division Training Camp Site is continued until the teams cut down to the 33 player limit.

Detroit Lions-----Ypsilanti, Mich.

Chicago Bears-----Rensselaer, Ind.

San Francisco 49ers---Menlo Park, Calif.

Exhibition Season

Los Angeles Rams-----Redlands, Calif.

Green Bay Packers-----Stephens Point, Wis.

Baltimore Colts-----Westminster, Md.

By the last of July or the first of August the teams of the National Football League are established in their training camps. This is the beginning of the exhibition season.

Number of Players Allowed Each Team

The present player limit in the National Football League is 33. This limit of 33 players is the maximum number of players a team can have on its squad at a given time during the regular league season. There is no minimum on a player limit. Once the exhibition games start, most

of the time, from then until the beginning of the league season is spent traveling or playing. The 33 man player limit does not go into effect until just before the first league game in September. This then enables the different teams to carry as many players on their squads as they wish until that time. This is important since the teams play a full schedule of exhibition games. season tickets back in the team's home town. This

can be done only if a team has a successful exhibition season, so every team is going all out to win in these games. The different teams have different policies for cutting down the number of players on their squads. A few (3) to publicize the National Football League. This is in players may be released before the first exhibition game, line with reason number one, and (4) to try out new players, but as a rule it is after the first exhibition game before as well as veteran players in new positions.

players begin to be put on waivers. This procedure is continued until the teams cut down to the 33 player limit.

Length of the Season

Exhibition Season

By the last of July or the first of August the teams of the National Football League are established in their training camps. This is the beginning of the exhibition season.

The teams have usually been in training three or four weeks before their first exhibition game. Once these games start, they come rather frequently. Each team plays about seven exhibition games in a period of four weeks, so it is apparent that once the exhibition games start, most of the time, from then until the beginning of the league season is spent traveling or playing.

There appear to be four main reasons for the exhibition games: (1) the main reason is to make money for the owners, (2) in line with the first reason, to promote the sale of season tickets back in the team's home town. This can be done only if a team has a successful exhibition season, so every team is going all out to win in these games, (3) to publicize the National Football League. This is in line with reason number one, and (4) to try out new players, as well as veteran players in new positions.

As can be seen above, in the reasons for playing exhibition games, professional football is a business, a big business. The owners of the professional teams are interested in profits. Therefore, the exploitation of the players in numerous ways is an accepted practice, such as not paying the players for exhibition games.

The league season terminates the exhibition season around the middle of September.

League Season

Once the league season gets under way, all games are played on Sunday. Every team in the League plays every Sunday for twelve weeks, making a total of twelve games. The regular league season ends on or about December 12.

The duration of the professional football season, from August 1 to December 12, is approximately 18 weeks or 4 and 1/2 months. This does not include any play-off games, if the need arises, or the championship game played around Christmas.

Determination of Champion

The National Football League is divided into two divisions of six teams each, Eastern and Western, and the winners of the two divisions play for the world professional

football championship. Each team plays the teams in their respective divisions twice, making a total of ten games. The other two games are played with teams out of the other division bringing the total of games played up to twelve.

The division winners are determined by the percentage of games won. The team having the greatest win percentage in each division is declared the winner of that division. However, it is not uncommon for two teams in the same division to tie for the top spot in that division. If this occurs, the two tied teams play one game to determine who will play in the championship game. If the score is tied at the end of the play-off game, then one extra sudden death period is played. In sudden death the team scoring first wins.

The winners of the two divisions meet for one game to determine the world's professional football champion. This is the players' game. The profits of the gate receipts are split between the players. The winning team receives 60% and the loser receives 40% of the net profit at the gate. The winner also represents the National Football League in the All-Star game.

The location of the championship game is alternated between the two divisions. On even years the game is played in the Eastern Division champion's home town,

and on the odd years the champion team of the Western Division is the host.

All-Star Game

The All-Star series⁵ was inaugurated in 1932 and is sponsored by the Chicago Tribune Charities, Inc. Mr. Arch Ward was the originator of the game, and its main purpose is to provide money for various charities.

The All-Star squad is composed of the best college players of the previous season and each member must be a senior. "Invitation to the All-Star squad is the goal of most college players." From the experience of the writer, it is the honor of playing in the game and not the money that beckons to college seniors. Each player receives \$150, expenses, and an All-Star sweater and blanket for participating in the game.

The collegians' opponent in the All-Star game is the World's Champion Professional Football team as decided in the National Football League. The All-Star game is the first appearance of the professional team which starts the season as the Champion of the National Football League.

5

Ward, Arch, "The All-Star Game," The Official National League Football Encyclopedia (Robert L. Treat, Editor), p. 322.

The game is played at Soldiers Field, Chicago, in August and is the grand opening for the coming football season.

1952 National Conference Pro-Bowl Game

The Pro-Bowl game was inaugurated in 1951 and is fast becoming one of the great classics of professional football. This great game pits 60 of the National Football League's finest players against each other and is the crowning glory to a long and laborous football season. The participants, 30 from each division, receive all of their expenses plus \$700 if their team wins and \$500 if they lose.

The game is usually on the second Sunday of January in the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles, California, and is sponsored by the Los Angeles Newspaper Publishers' Association. All of the net profits are given to charities.

The coaches of the divisional winners are automatically the coaches for the two teams in the Pro-Bowl Game unless they coached in this game the previous year. In the event the same team is the division champion two successive years, the coach of the second place team coaches in the Pro-Bowl Game.

The players for this game are chosen by sports writers, and the coaches of the two teams make one selection.

Pro-Bowl Record

| | | |
|------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1951 | American Conference All-Stars..... | 28 |
| | National Conference All-Stars..... | 27 |
| 1952 | National Conference All-Stars..... | 30 |
| | American Conference All-Stars..... | 13 |
| 1953 | National Conference All-Stars..... | 27 |
| | American Conference All-Stars..... | 7 |
| 1954 | Eastern Conference All-Stars..... | 20 |
| | Western Conference All-Stars..... | 9 |
| 1955 | Western Conference All-Stars..... | 26 |
| | Eastern Conference All-Stars..... | 19 ⁶ |

Canadian League

In recent years Canadian football has come to mean the same thing to the National Football League as the All-American Conference meant to the National Professional Football Association. The All-American Conference bucked the monopolistic National Professional Association unsuccessfully for a number of years. In 1949 these two leagues merged into the National Football League. Since that time the National Football League again more or less monopolized professional football until a few years ago when Canadian football began to grow more and more in popular favor with the American sports fans. This is due to the televising of their games. 1954 was the first year Canadian football games were televised nationally in the United States.

In fact, it has become so popular that some of the players in the National Football League have chosen to play in Canada rather than in the National Football League. Every year the Canadian League entices many of the nation's outstanding collegiate players to play in Canada rather than enter the ranks of the National Football League. This is because Canadian teams pay more for the services of outstanding players than do those of the National Football League. They are able to do this because each team is limited to 10 American players. The remainder of the squad is made up of Canadian players who do not command the contracts American players do.

The season in Canadian football is quite rigorous. Starting in August and ending in November, the league season consists of 19 games, making the teams play twice a week. The reason for the early and short season is the weather. American players usually find themselves so much superior to Canadian players that they have to play both offense and defense, sometimes putting in as much as 60 minutes a game.

Canadian football is organized somewhat like the National Football League. There are two divisions, and the winner of each division meets in a championship game known as the Gray Cup Game to decide the Canadian Football Champion.

The game itself resembles that of American football. However, there are a number of differences. The field, instead of being 100 yards long and 53 yards wide, is 110 yards long and 60 yards wide with 20 yard end zones. The number of downs in which to make a first down is 3 instead of 4 as it is in American football. This puts a premium on the passing game. One of the major differences between the two is that in Canadian football there are twelve men on a team. This gives them an extra receiver in their passing attack. There is no downfield blocking in Canadian football. Once the runner passes the line of scrimmage, he is on his own. When receiving a punt, the members of the punting team must give the receiver at least 5 yards in which to field the ball. The scoring in Canadian football is as follows:

Touchdown.....5

Field Goal.....3

Safety.....2

Extra Point.....1

Rouge.....1

The rouge is scored when a punted ball enters the end zone and the receiving team fails to bring it out. After a rouge, the ball is put in play on the 25 yard line.

The National Football League has been trying to make some kind of agreement with Canadian teams in respect

to their raiding the talent of the National Football League. However, the rift between the two factions has grown wider and wider and on March 28, 1955, the following article by Hugh Fullerton, Jr. appeared in the Austin American newspaper.

US-Canadian Grid Player Rift Widens

New York, March 28 (AP)-The National Football League has abandoned its efforts to reach a peace agreement with Canadian football and has adopted a divide-and-conquer strategy to end across-the-border player raids.

At a special executive meeting called at the behest of the Detroit Lions, the club owners agreed to try Commissioner Bert Bell's plan of seeking individual agreements with the Canadian clubs to respect one another's player contracts and options.

If enough Canadian clubs are brought under such contracts, Bell said, they will be forced to bring pressure on the few which have refused to respect the contracts held by the NFL clubs.

So far, only one such agreement has been reached - between Washington of the NFL and Calgary of Canada's Western Interprovincial Football Union.

The principal objection to such agreements again raised by Detroit, is that the Canadian season ends in November and thereafter the Canadian clubs are ready to start signing U. S. college players. The U. S. teams can't contact the collegians until after their draft meeting in January.

This was the situation in the case of Gordon Molloy, the original subject of this meeting. Molloy, star University of Miami halfback, signed with the Montreal Alouettes and then with Detroit. Bell refused at first to accept the Detroit contract.

Later Bell reversed this decision when two of the Canadian Big Four League clubs, Toronto and Ottawa, signed players under option to NFL teams.

The only action on that case today was unanimous confirmation of Bell's authority to disapprove contracts and of the right of clubs to demand a hearing on his decisions.

Bell re-asserted his position today, saying he had "turned back" the authority granted him in January to open negotiations for an agreement with the Canadian leagues.

"They have no constitution, no central office and nobody who has the authority to make an agreement," Bell said. "It's up to the Canadian clubs now. They'll have to control their own situation and their own clubs. I still have the authority to make an agreement if they're willing to be fair, to respect our contracts and options, including their duration, and to respect the college eligibility rules by not signing players before the completion of their fourth year of eligibility, including bowl games."

"Otherwise it's open warfare, except where there are individual agreements and excepting the Edmonton club. Edmonton never has taken one of our players and it won the championship."

"As long as they keep on like that I never will approve a contract with any player who belongs to Edmonton."⁷

his 1954 contract with the Washington Redskins of the National Football League.

The reader is urged to read this instrument in its entirety if he is to understand fully the player's part in professional football. The contract clearly states what the player is to expect and receive by playing football in the National Football League.

The contract is sent to the player in triplicate. If the contract is accepted by the player, he signs all three copies and returns them to the club. The club in

CHAPTER III

CONTRACTUAL MATTERS

Contracts

"A common definition of contract identifies it with a legally enforceable promise or set of promises. The term is often used broadly, however, both in legal and lay parlance to refer to any significant agreement and to the written agreement in which it is embodied."¹

Following is an exact word for word copy of the Standard Players Contract used by the teams of the National Football League. It was taken from the writer's copy of his 1954 contract with the Washington Redskins of the National Football League.

The reader is urged to read this instrument in its entirety if he is to understand fully the player's part in professional football. The contract clearly states what the player is to expect and receive by playing football in the National Football League.

The contract is sent to the player in triplicate. If the contract is accepted by the player, he signs all three copies and returns them to the club. The club in

¹

The American Peoples Encyclopedia, Vol. 6, p. 174.

turn signs the instrument and forwards it to the Commissioner for his approval. One copy is retained by the Commissioner; one is sent to the club; and one is returned to the player.

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

STANDARD PLAYERS CONTRACT

Between

.....
 which operates....., and which is a member
 of the National Football League, and which is here-
 inafter called the "Club", and.....of.....
hereinafter called the "Player".

In consideration of the respective promises
 herein the parties hereto agree as follows:

1. The term of this contract shall be from the
 date of execution hereof until the first day of
 May following the close of the football season
 commencing in....., subject however, to rights
 of prior termination as specified herein.

2. The Player agrees that during the term of
 this contract he will play football and will en-
 gage in activities related to football only for
 the Club and as directed by the Club according to
 the Constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations
 of the National Football League, hereinafter called
 the "League," and of the Club, and the Club, sub-
 ject to the provisions hereof, agrees during such
 period to employ the Player as a skilled football
 Player. The Player agrees during the term of this
 contract to report promptly for the Club's training
 season to render his full time services during the
 training seasons and at the Club's direction to
 participate in all practice sessions and in all
 League and other football games scheduled by the
 Club.

3. For the Player's services as a skilled foot-
 ball player during the term of this contract, and
 for his agreement not to play football or engage
 in activities related to football for any other
 person, firm, corporation or institution during the
 term of this contract, and for the option herein-
 after set forth giving the Club the right to renew
 this contract, and for the other undertakings of

the Player herein, the Club promises to pay the Player each football season during the term of this contract the sum of \$.....to be payable as follows:

75% of said salary in weekly installments commencing with the first and ending with the last regularly scheduled League game played by the Club during such season and the balance of 25% of said sum at the end of said regularly scheduled League game.

In addition, the Club promises and agrees to pay the reasonable board and lodging expenses of the Player incurred while playing games for the Club in other than the Club's home city and also to pay all proper and necessary traveling expenses of the Player and his meals en route to and from said games.

4. The Player agrees at all times to comply with and to be bound by all the provisions of the Constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the League and of the Club, all of which are hereby made a part of this contract. If the Player fails to comply with said Constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations the Club shall have the right to terminate this contract or to take such other action as may be specified in said constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations or as may be directed by the Commissioner of the League, hereinafter called the "Commissioner." The Player agrees to submit himself to the discipline of the League and of the Club for any violation of such Constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations subject however, to the right to a hearing by the Commissioner. All matters in dispute between the Player and the Club shall be referred to the Commissioner and his decision shall be accepted as final, complete, conclusive, binding and unappealable, by the Player and by the Club. The Player hereby waives any and all rights of action against the Commissioner, the League, the Club or any of its members or stockholders, and against any officer of the Club or of the League arising out of or in connection with decisions of the Commissioner, except to the extent of awards made by the Commissioner to the Player. The Player hereby acknowledges that he has read said Constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations and that he understands their meaning.

5. The Player promises and agrees that during the term of this contract he will not play football or engage in activities related to football

for any other person, firm, corporation or institution except with the prior written consent of the Club and the Commissioner, and that he will not during the term of this contract engage in any game or exhibition of baseball, basketball, hockey, wrestling, boxing or any other sport which endangers his ability to perform his services hereunder, without the prior written consent of the Club. The Player likewise promises and agrees that during the term of this contract, when, as and if he shall receive an invitation to participate in any All-Star football game which is approved by the League, he will play in said game in accordance with all the terms and conditions relating thereto, including the player compensation therein set forth, as are agreed to between the League and the Sponsor of such game.

6. The Player represents and warrants that he is and will continue to be sufficiently highly skilled in all types of football team play to play professional football of the caliber required by the League and the Club, that he is and will continue to be in excellent physical condition, and agrees to perform his services hereunder to the complete satisfaction of the Club and its Head Coach. If in the opinion of the Head Coach the Player does not maintain himself in excellent physical condition or fails at any time during the football seasons included in the term of this contract to demonstrate sufficient skill and capacity to play professional football of the caliber required by the League and by the Club, or if in the opinion of the Head Coach the Player's work or conduct in the performance of this contract is unsatisfactory as compared with the work and conduct of other members of the Club's squad of players, the Club shall have the right to terminate this contract upon written notice to the player of such termination.

7. Upon termination of this contract the Club shall pay the Player only the balance remaining due him for traveling and board and lodging expenses and any balance remaining due him for football seasons completed prior to termination, and, if termination takes place during a football season, any balance remaining due him on that portion of his total compensation for that season as provided in paragraph 3 hereof which the number of regularly scheduled League games already played by the Club during that season bears to the total number of League games scheduled for the Club for that season.

8. The Player hereby represents that he has special, exceptional and unique knowledge, skill and ability as a football player, the loss of which cannot be estimated with any certainty and cannot be fairly or adequately compensated by damages and therefore agrees that the Club shall have the right, in addition to other rights which the Club may possess, to enjoin him by appropriate injunction proceedings against playing football or engaging in activities related to football for any person, firm, corporation or institution and against any other breach of this contract.

9. It is mutually agreed that the Club shall have the right to sell, exchange, assign and transfer this contract and the Player's services to any other Club of the League and the Player agrees to accept such assignment and to report promptly to the assignee club and faithfully to perform and carry out this contract with the assignee club as if it had been entered into by the Player with the assignee club instead of with this club.

10. On or before the date of expiration of this contract, the Club may, upon notice in writing to the Player, renew this contract for a further term until the first day of May following said expiration on the same terms as are provided by this contract, except that (1) the Club may fix the rate of compensation to be paid by the Club to the Player during said period of renewal, which compensation shall not be less than ninety percent (90%) of the amount paid by the Club to the Player during the preceding season, and (2) after such renewal this contract shall not include a further option to the Club to renew the contract; the phrase "rate of compensation" as above used shall not be understood to include bonus payments or payments of any nature whatsoever other than the precise sum set forth in paragraph 3 hereof.

11. Player acknowledges the right and power of the Commissioner of the National Football League (a) to fine and suspend, (b) to find and suspend for life or indefinitely, and/or (c) to cancel the contract of, any player who accepts a bribe or who agrees to throw or fix a game or who, having knowledge of the same, fails to report an offered bribe or an attempt to throw or fix a game, or who bets on a game, or who is guilty of any conduct detrimental to the welfare of the National Football League or of professional football; and the Player hereby releases the Commissioner of the National Football League, individually

and in his official capacity, and also the National Football League and every Club and every officer, director and stockholder of the League and of every club thereof, jointly and severally, from all claims and demands for damages and every claim and demand whatsoever he may have arising out of or in connection with the decision of said Commissioner of the National Football League in any of the aforesaid cases.

12. Any payments made hereunder to the Player for a period during which he is entitled to workman's compensation benefits by reason of temporary total, permanent total, temporary partial, or permanent partial disability shall be deemed an advance payment of compensation benefits due the Player, and the Club shall be entitled to be reimbursed the amounts thereof out of any award or compensation.

13. This agreement contains the entire agreement between the parties and there are no oral or written inducements, promises or agreements except as contained herein. This agreement shall become valid and binding upon each party hereto only when, as and if it shall be approved by the Commissioner.

14. This agreement has been made under and shall be governed by the laws of the State of

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Player has hereunto set his hand and seal and the Club has caused this contract to be executed by its duly authorized officer on the date set opposite their respective names.

WITNESS: Club
 By
 Date
 Date Player
 Approved.....
 Commissioner Date Player's Address²

This Copy to be sent to Commissioner for Approval
 Return to Player

In addition to the contract between the player and the Club, the player also agrees to be legally bound by the constitution and by-laws of the National Football League and by the rules and regulations of the member clubs.

The following are excerpts from the by-laws of the National Football League.

EXCERPTS FROM BY-LAWS OF
THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Each of the member clubs and their respective individual owners, partners, associations, directors, officers and stockholders, coaches, players, and employees as the case may be, must read and agree to be legally bound by all the terms and provisions of the constitution and by-laws of the National Football League and the rules and regulations of the member clubs.

Every party involved by the decision of the Commissioner, releases the Commissioner and waives every claim each or any or all may have against the Commissioner individually and in his official capacity and/or against the National Football League and the member clubs for damages and for all claims and demands whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the decision of the Commissioner.

1. The Commissioner shall hear and finally decide any dispute relative to which a player or a coach is a party.

2. The Commissioner shall have the authority to remit any fine imposed by him or to suspend any sentence imposed by him.

3. The Commissioner is authorized and empowered, after notice and hearing, (a) to suspend and/or fine up to but not exceeding the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) any Club officer, League officer, director, stockholder, player, coach, official, employee or member Club, and (b) to cancel the contract of any such person or Club, for the violation of any of the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the League or for any action detrimental to the welfare of the National Football League or of professional football.

The Commissioner is authorized and empowered, after notice and hearing, (a) to suspend for a specified period of time, (b) to suspend indefinitely, (c) to suspend and bar from the League for life, (d) to cancel the contract of, (e) to order the sale, within thirty days, of stock or any interest of whatsoever kind, and in addition to the above, as well, (f) to fine up to but not exceeding the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000), any Club officer, League officer, director, stockholder, player, coach, official, employee or member club (1) who or which has knowledge of an offer, or (2) who has received an offer, directly or indirectly, by insinuation or by implication, to control, to fix or to bet money or anything of value on the outcome or score of a professional football game in any manner whatsoever and who fails to report the same immediately as hereinafter provided. In the case of a player, such report shall be made to the player's coach or owner or principal representative of the player's Club. In the case of a Club officer, League officer, director, stockholder, coach, official, employee or member Club, such report shall be made to the Commissioner.

The Commissioner is authorized and empowered to bar from entrance to any park in use by the National Football League or its affiliates any person whose presence, in the sole opinion of the Commissioner is detrimental to the best interest of the National Football League or of professional football.

Every party involved by the decisions of the Commissioner, releases the Commissioner and waives every claim each or any or all may have against the Commissioner individually and in his official capacity and/or against the National Football League for damages and for all claims and demands whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the decision of the Commissioner.

4. PROHIBITIONS a. To tamper with a player on another club.

b. To enter an official's dressing room.

c. To issue a free ticket of admission to a visiting club or a visiting player.

5. BETTING Any person connected with the National Football League or any League member, in any capacity, whether stockholder, officer, director, coach, player, employee or official who bets

money or any other valuable thing on the outcome or score of any game or games played in the National Football League or by any member of the National Football League, (a) shall be expelled from the League, (b) his contract shall be cancelled and, (c) in the case of a stockholder, the sale of his stock or interest within thirty (30) days shall be ordered, by the Commissioner from whose decisions there shall be no appeal and every party involved in or affected by the decision of the Commissioner releases the Commissioner and waives every claim each or any or all may have against the Commissioner individually and in his official capacity and/or against the National Football League and against any director, officer and stockholder of every club in the National Football League for damages and for all claims and demands whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the decision of the Commissioner.

6. BONUSES No stockholder, officer, director, coach, player, employee or official shall offer, or pay to a player or a coach and no player or coach shall receive any bonus or money or thing of value for winning any particular scheduled National League football game.

7. No person shall be eligible to be a player who is a student in any academic institution in which he holds status as an amateur, and who is still eligible for inter-collegiate athletics, except that any player whose class has been graduated, or who has received a diploma from a recognized college or university shall be eligible to play in the National Football League. The term "graduated" shall mean four years after the player matriculates in and attends any recognized college or university.

8. The club may suspend and/or fine a player for violation of the club's rules and regulations.

9. The Standard form of Player's Contract shall be used by all Clubs.

10. The club claiming a player whose contract has been awarded to it, must assume liability for the payment of the player's salary from the time of claiming until said claiming club gives the player his release, but any arrears in salary shall be paid by the releasing club.

11. Waivers may not be recalled on a player more than once in any one season by the same club.

12. No persons shall be permitted to sit on the player's bench except owners, coaches, players, club

house boys, trainers and doctors of the participating teams.

13. Any club which pays a fine for a player who has been so penalized may be subjected to a fine itself.

14. No player may participate in any game after the completion of the schedule of the team of which he is a member and prior to August the first of the following season.

15. The player grants to the club controlling his contract and to the National Football League severally and jointly the privilege and authority to use his name and/or picture for publicity and/or advertising purposes in newspapers, magazines, motion pictures, game programs and annual roster manuals, radio material, television telecast, and all other publicity and/or advertising mediums providing such publicity and/or advertising does not in itself constitute an endorsement by that individual player of a commercial product.³

Bert Bell
Commissioner.

Salaries

There are no standard salaries in the National Football League as far as this writer has been able to determine. Salaries range all the way from \$2,500 per year, and possibly lower, to \$25,000, or better. The reader can see that there is a tremendous range between these two figures. While only a few will make that minimum salary, even fewer will make the maximum salary. The majority of players will receive less than \$10,000 per year.

³ National Football League, Excerpts From By-Laws of the National Football League, (Printed leaflet), no date.

Salaries as a topic of conversation between the players is a very ticklish one, and the writer, in his experience, has never heard another player state flatly what his salary was, with the exception of a very few close friends in the strictest confidence. On the whole, players do not wish to know what other players make because it might show their incompetence in bargaining for a higher salary.

A collegiate player who has received a good bit of national publicity or has been placed on one of the many All-American teams can look forward to commanding a respectable salary--around \$10,000 or better. However, the majority of football players do not receive national publicity and do not have the bargaining power of being so well known. Consequently, their salaries may well range below \$10,000, approximately \$6,000 to \$8,000.

Average salaries in the National Football League, excluding the highest and lowest ones, are \$7,000 for backs and \$5,000 for linemen. While the exact average salary of the National Football League would be almost impossible to arrive at, the above figures in the opinion of the writer will not be more than \$1,000 off either way.

The player's ability is not the only factor in determining his salary. It is also his ability to negotiate for a salary equal to his prowess as a football player.

Non-Fulfillment of Contract

When can the contract be terminated? This contract can be terminated at any time by the club owning the contract. The club has the right under Article 6 of the Standard Players Contract to terminate this contract at any time.

Can the player terminate this contract? No. The player cannot terminate his contract, but he can refuse to fulfill the terms of the contract. If a player signs the contract and then later decides not to play professional football, he can do so as long as he does not play football or engage in any activities related to football for any other person, firm, corporation, or institution. As long as he does not engage in any game or exhibition of baseball, basketball, wrestling, hockey, boxing, or any other sport which endangers his ability to perform his services as a professional football player while still under contract to a club in the National Football League, he does not have to play football for them.

After the contract has expired, along with its options, if taken up by the club, the player is then free to do as he wishes concerning his football ability. He can play for any other club in the National Football League if such club desires his services.

If a player decides not to play for the team owning his contract, he cannot leave that club to play for another one in the National Football League. The club owning his contract must give its permission to this desired change or the Commissioner will not approve the contract the player would have to sign with the new club. If a player actually wishes to play for another club and will not play at all unless he can play for them, he should inform his club of his desires. Usually the club will try to trade him as they do not wish to lose a prospective football player, either the one under contract or the one they will obtain by a trade.

Availability of Players

Players in the National Football League are recruited from college and university teams with a very few exceptions. The National Football League has the largest and best farm system in the world at no expense to itself.

No individual is eligible to play football in the National Football League who has not graduated from an academic institution unless his class has been graduated.

This means that four years after a person has entered a recognized college or university, he is eligible to play professional football. If he does not enter college, he is eligible as soon as he finishes high school. If he enters

a junior college, he is eligible after completing two the years.

by reason of their ability to pay very high salaries. De-
Draft Choices

cause of the procedure of draft choices, the weakest team Around the first of the year, the twelve teams of in the league will have the right to the best football the National Football League meet for their annual draft player in the nation. This helps equalize the strength of selections. At this meeting players are picked from the the teams in the league. seniors of the previous year's collegiate teams. Once a player has been chosen by a particular club, that club has the sole negotiation rights to that player. In other words, if the player does not wish to play with the club that drafted him, he cannot play with any other club in the National Football League unless the team which drafted him trades him.

to perform and carry out the contract as if it were entered into with the assigned club in the beginning. The procedure at the draft meeting is as follows. There is one bonus pick. The club which is entitled to this bonus draft choice is chosen by chance. The club finishing the lowest in the previous year's games has first draft choice in the first round. The second lowest team has the second choice, and so on until all the teams have had one draft choice. The same process is repeated until all the players have been drafted.

and so on through all twelve clubs. If it should happen that no one picks up the contract, the player has nothing for the coming season to a team for one of its players to left to do but go home. be used in the present season. The club naturally will not exercise this draft choice at the draft meeting.

The purpose of the draft meeting is to prevent the wealthy clubs from obtaining all the best football players by reason of their ability to pay very high salaries. Because of the procedure of draft choices, the weakest team in the league will have the right to the best football player in the nation. This helps equalize the strength of the teams in the league.

Trading, Selling, and Releasing Players

Article 9 of the contract between the player and his club states that the club has the right to sell or trade the contract along with the player's services to any other club in the National Football League and the player has agreed to perform and carry out the contract as if it were entered into with the assignee club in the beginning.

When a club releases a player, the club places the player's name on a waiver list, relinquishing their rights to him. The list is distributed by the Commissioner to the other teams in the league. Here, as in the draft meeting, the team with the lowest standing has first choice to take up his contract and add him to their squad, the team with the second lowest standing has the second chance, and so on through all twelve clubs. If it should happen that no one picks up the contract, the player has nothing left to do but go home.

the club is to use. The following is a typical day's
schedule for about the first two weeks.

PLAYERS' LIFE DURING THE SEASON

8:00 Breakfast Training Camp

9:30 Practice

The life of a player during training camp is a very rigorous one. Training camps are for the purpose of trying out new and old players for the various positions on the team, and for whipping the teams into shape for the coming football season. The player finds training camp pleasant enough as far as atmosphere is concerned, but it is here that he has to work the hardest.

Depending on the coach. The evening meeting may be eliminated. Later a meeting may be substituted for the morning or afternoon practice, or there may be only one practice a day and a meeting in the evening. When the coach believes the squad has progressed far enough, he may require only one practice a day. Usually when this occurs, the first exhibition game is only a few days away. Then the squad gets down to the serious business at hand, that of separating the men from the boys. magazines, watching television, and seeing

an occasional movie when time permits. Poker is the most popular card game with some. Pinocchio and bridge follow in popularity. However, most off time is spent resting. For the first two weeks the schedule is rather heavy. The players' time is taken up completely with practicing, studying, and meetings. A considerable amount of time is spent by the player in learning the system

and laundry, are taken care of by the club. However,

the club is to use. The following is a typical day's schedule for about the first two weeks.

8:00 Breakfast
 9:30 Practice
 12:00 Lunch
 3:00 Practice
 6:00 Supper
 7:30 Meeting
 11:00 Lights Out

After about two weeks the schedule may be lightened, depending on the coach. The evening meeting may be eliminated. Later a meeting may be substituted for the morning or afternoon practice, or there may be only one practice a day and a meeting in the evening. When the coach believes the squad has progressed far enough, he may require only one practice a day. Usually when this occurs, the first exhibition game is only a few days away.

The players' recreation usually consists of playing cards, reading magazines, watching television, and seeing an occasional movie when time permits. Poker is the most popular card game with some. Pinochle and bridge follow in popularity. However, most off time is spent resting.

The players' living expenses in camp, room, board, and laundry, are taken care of by the club. However,

there are a few incidental expenses that the player will have to take care of out of his own pocket. These expenses include toilet articles, magazines, cigarettes, if he smokes, movies, if he cares to go, stamps, stationery, etc. It has been the experience of the writer that \$100 if spent wisely will last the player until the first league game. If the player does not make the team, he is out only the amount he has spent for these incidentals.

Ice cream, cake, fresh fruit

The food served in training camp is delicious, and in spite of all this good food, frequent trips to there is an ample amount. A typical menu is as follows: the local meat shop are made in between meals when time permits.

Breakfast

Bacon

Scrambled eggs

Cooked and dry cereals

Toast

Orange juice, coffee, hot chocolate, milk

Fresh fruit

Lunch

Soup

Sliced ham, turkey

Lettuce, tomatoes

Condiments

Practice During the Season

Iced tea

Assorted varieties of bread

Fresh fruit

defense. Dinner for the coming Sunday are practiced.

During Soup league season, there are no scrimmages during

practice. Veal cutlets goes through the plays to perfect

timing. Baked potato weaknesses in the preceding game as

shown in movies of the game. The teams do not scrim-

mage to avoid possible injury to the players.

Butter

At meetings, players watch movies of their preceding

Iced tea, coffee, milk

game, watch movies of the preceding game of the team they

Ice cream, cake, fresh fruit

will play on the coming Sunday, and get the scout report

for that team. Almost as much time and work is put into

the local malt shop are made in between meals when time

the meetings as into actual practice.

permits.

A typical practice schedule for a week is as follows:

The policies of the owner and coach are one factor

in determining how pleasant or unpleasant training camp

will be. Some coaches have a very stiff program while

others do not work the players so hard. A player's

attitude makes a big difference, too. If he goes to

camp with the idea of participating to the fullest, he

will probably enjoy training camp. On the other hand, if

he does not have the right frame of mind, it will be in

all likelihood a miserable experience for him.

9:30 - 11:00 Practice

Practice During the Season

7:30 Meeting (movie of preceding game)

Practice during the season is confined to preparing

the team for the coming game. Special offense plays and

defense variations for the coming Sunday are practiced.

During the league season, there are no scrimmages during practice. The team goes through the plays to perfect timing and works on weaknesses in the preceding game as shown by the movies of the game. The teams do not scrimmage because of possible injury to the players. practice, either immediately before or after practice.

At meetings, players watch movies of their preceding game, watch movies of the preceding game of the team they will play on the coming Sunday, and get the scout report for that team. Almost as much time and work is put into the meetings as into actual practice.

A typical practice schedule for a week is as follows:

Saturday

9:30 - 10:00 Practice

7:30 Meeting (review scout report and movie of team to be played)

Sunday

2:00 Game

Monday

Off

Tuesday

9:30 - 11:00 Practice

7:30 Meeting (movie of preceding game)

Wednesday

9:00 - 11:00 Practice

rooms. Thursday Before the game starts, the offensive teams

are in 9:30 - 11:00 Practice come on the field. At 2:00

sharp 7:30 Meeting (scout report) nothing remains

to be Friday get dressed and go home to start resting

up for 9:30 - 10:30 Practice

Meetings may be arranged to coincide with practice, either immediately before or after practice.

Most of the traveling is done by plane unless the

Game Activities distance is only several hundred miles. The team does not

charter. The day of the game players have their pre-game

meal around 10:00 o'clock. The trainers then tape the

players in preparation for the game. The players rest

until about 11:45 at which time they go to the stadium

and dress for the game. Before the team goes on the

field to limber up, the coach tells the players which

ones will play on the various teams, such as offensive

team, defensive team, kick-off team, kick-off receiving

team, punting team, punt receiving team, extra point and

field goal teams. As soon as the teams are on the field

for the limbering up period, the captains toss a coin to

decide who will kick and receive and who will defend each

goal. The coin-tossing ceremony performed immediately

before the game is merely a ceremony for the benefit of

the spectators as the decision has already been made.

The players warm up, run through pass plays, and practice

kicking until about 1:45 when they return to their dressing

rooms. Just before the game starts, the offensive teams are introduced and the squads come on the field. At 2:00 sharp the game is started. After the game, nothing remains to be done except get dressed and go home to start resting up for the next one.

Travel

Most of the traveling is done by plane unless the distance is only several hundred miles. The team does not charter a special plane, but rather buys the required number of seats on a regular commercial plane. Arrangements for travel have to be made so that if some delay should occur, there will be ample time to arrive for the game by taking a later train or plane. Unless the team is going all the way across the country, they will leave some time Saturday during the league season when games are played on Sunday. After the game has been played, the team boards the plane or train as soon as possible after they have dressed. Their supper is served to them on the plane or train.

While traveling, the players have certain standards of dress they must meet. These standards vary with the teams. Some require their players to wear a tie and coat at all times in public when appearing with the squad, including the times they are traveling. Others permit a

sport shirt with coat. However, they all require that their players be neat and well-groomed in their appearance.

Living Conditions

Until the league season opens, the team is responsible for the living conditions of its players. The training camp site is usually a small college so that all facilities for practicing football will be easily available. The problem of housing and feeding the players is also taken care of by existing college facilities. The food is prepared and served in the school cafeteria, and the players are housed in the college dormitory. The excellence of the food has been discussed under the section Training Camp, and the subject of the living quarters will be covered if we say that while the rooms are not luxurious, they are clean, comfortable, and entirely adequate.

When the team breaks training camp and starts traveling to play its exhibition games, the team takes accommodations in a hotel or sometimes a motel. The lodgings chosen by the team are always very good and quite often are the best. Some examples are the Cliff House in San Francisco, the Town House in Kansas City, the Warwick in New York City, the Schenly in Pittsburgh, the DuPont Plaza in Washington, D. C., and the Hollywood-Roosevelt in Los Angeles.

After the team has arrived at its home town after the exhibition games, there is usually a short period of time until the league season starts. The club continues to meet all living expenses for the team. The management will select a hotel for the team for this period of time.

Once the league season starts, the players are then responsible for their living accommodations. The unmarried player usually rents an apartment in the hotel selected by the team for its use as a whole, or he may take an apartment elsewhere. Nearly always, two or three players share an apartment as living expenses are greatly reduced by doing this. A more or less standard price for an apartment is \$5.00 per day.

The married player usually has his family come to the home town of the team after the season has begun and it is fairly certain he will not be cut from the squad, although there is never any assurance of this. The family will rent an apartment in an apartment hotel or apartment development. These apartments as a rule are modern and very comfortable. The rent will range from \$100 to \$130 per month.

There are a few players who make their year-round home in the home town of the team. Most of these players own their own homes. The wives of the players usually have

When the team must spend a night away from its home town, the club is responsible for accommodations for the team. The same type hotel is chosen as the ones used during the exhibition games.

Some clubs have instituted the practice of having its players spend the night together the night before a game to insure their proper rest. The same hotel chosen by the team for its use at the beginning of the season will probably serve the club for this purpose also. These accommodations are at the expense of the club.

asked to bring two Social Experience

Social activities of the players during the season are more or less limited to activities among the players and their families. A group usually decides to stay in the same hotel or apartment development. It may be that for years members of the team have lived in a certain place during the football season. It is taken for granted that a family will try to get an apartment there if they want to be that close to the other members of the team. The football season is usually looked forward to as a pleasant two or three months, and everyone is in a mood to be congenial and enjoy himself. Families visit back and forth between themselves and go on sightseeing excursions together. The wives of the players usually have

coffee together in the morning and go on shopping trips together. After a game, someone usually gives a party to which all are invited.

The unmarried players' social activities vary. Some are content to go to the movies with their roommate and read while others prefer a more active night life.

A few players have friends or relatives in the home town of the team. In such cases they will see their friends or relatives several times during the season. Quite often the single player who is invited out will be asked to bring two or three other players.

When the team plays a game in or very near the home town of one of the players, he will usually invite a group of players who are his closest friends out to his home.

The more prominent players are invited to attend numerous banquets and dinners. Some of them are asked so often that it is not as much a pleasure as would be assumed. The menu is invariably roast chicken and peas or rare roast beef and peas.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION FROM PLAYERS STANDPOINT

Professional football today is more of a business than a sport. If it were a sport, the thrill of the physical exercise and competition involved would be sufficient, but the goal of the promoters of professional football is ever-increasing gate receipts. The only way they can achieve this is with a group of players who are more adept at the sport than most of the other teams.

Professional football is controlled by a handful of people. These are the owners and the Commissioner of the National Football League. They make all decisions, and all decisions are final unless the same group decides to change them.

Contract and salary negotiations are made with the prospective players individually. The prospective player has no way of knowing the stage of negotiation the team is in with other players or even if the team is negotiating with certain players. He can read the draft choices, which are usually listed in the newspapers, and if he was with the team the previous year, he can tell in this way about how strong the competition is for his particular position.

When a player signs his contract, there may be a very small piece in the paper to the effect that he has signed a contract with a particular team, but very seldom are further terms of the contract given. If a player is very prominent, the papers may give the terms of the contract, but these are often exaggerated.

One of the things which make the game of professional football such an efficient one is the never-ending supply of new players. Every college and university has a potential supply of talent for the professional football business. A player must strive for perfection in every assignment. His every move will be analyzed, and if it looks like his ability is not sufficient, there is always an eager newcomer to take his place. The players know this, and when they are playing a game, they are holding down a job and not merely making an effort for the alma mater. The coaches, too, know that the players are aware of the situation.

Professional football is becoming more popular every year because it gives the fans the type of football they wish to see. Not only is it a game of precision, but it is also a wide open game. Both teams are trying to win every minute they play. Theoretically high school and college football is supposed to give its players an opportunity to develop their physical skills and teach

them sportsmanship and teamwork. Although these qualities are essential in any game, the main goal in every professional football game is to win that game and give the fans a good show. The professional teams have a wide field to pick their players from and naturally pick the best. Every man on a team is a specialist in his particular position. A team's passer is the best passer the team can acquire, and it is the same with every other position. A good college player should be even better in professional football than he was in college football. In college he is limited by players who do not properly carry out their assignments for one reason or another. By its very nature, football is a team game, and the natural result is that a team whose members can perform and do perform their parts well will give a better showing than a team on which some players do their jobs well and some do not.

The insecurity naturally involved in professional football places a tremendous mental strain on the player. Being released is a risk every player takes, no matter how good he may be, and he should face the consequences in his mind. It may be that his team does not need as many players as it has in the position he fills. If he is an able player, chances are good that he will be picked up by another team, depending of course on how their players are distributed. Even so, it is a blow to a player's

pride, although a change to another team may ultimately be to his advantage. In the event a player is released and is not picked up by another team, the situation is somewhat worse. If he is released before the league season starts, he has spent considerable time and has received no reimbursement. Not only this, but he would probably have found a job elsewhere if he had not attempted to play professional football, and it would appear that he would be justified in counting such salary he would have received as part of the price he had to pay for going to training camp. The later in the season a player is released, the better off he will be financially.

Physical injury is another unpleasant thing to expect from professional football. Minor injuries are prevalent, but really serious ones are rare. The majority of them are bad enough to still be painful a week later but not bad enough to prevent the player's participation in the game.

One should not get the impression that there are no good features of professional football for the player. The salary is good, especially considering only six months at the most are required by the team. A young man just getting out of college probably could not make as much just starting out in another business. Several years of professional football give him a chance to save a bit of

money, provided he wishes to save. Professional football also gives its players an opportunity travel and see more of the country than they probably would otherwise. The player also has the opportunity to make friends of people from all over the country and thus broaden his experience and understanding. One of the main advantages of playing professional football is the publicity it gives a person. This publicity and knowledge of his name can be very helpful when the player is through playing and is ready to enter another business.

Except for a very few, professional football is a game for young men. The player should remember this and plan his future accordingly. It can be a very helpful experience if handled properly. If handled improperly, it can be just so much time wasted.

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